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Mujeeb Ahmad

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Da‘wah Activities of the Pakistani Barelwis: Case of the Da‘wat-i-Islami

Mujeeb Ahmad*

Department of History and Pakistan Studies
International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to highlight the *da‘wah* approaches and methodology of the *Da‘wat-i-Islāmī* (DI) and contribution along with a survey of the *da‘wah* activities of the Barelwis, based on primary sources. DI uses the Barelwi faith as its religious mark. Barelwis are representatives of the ‘popular’ and ‘*Ṣūfī*-oriented’ Islam. The driving force behind this facet of Islam is ‘to love Prophet Muḥammad (SAW) and follow his *Sunnah*’. This is the focal point of all *da‘wah* activities of the *Barelwis*. DI started its work in Karachi in 1981. It aims at promoting and deepening love for the Prophet Muḥammad (SAW). Its next aim is to establish a society similar to the early Muslim community of Madīnah through peaceful preaching. It expanded gradually all over Pakistan and then became so conspicuous, that nowadays it is functional in more than 180 countries and thus has turned into a global *tablīghī* movement. It has its own edifying literature. The most important of which is *Faīdān-i-Sunnat*. In this work, the *Sunnah* of the Prophet regarding daily affairs of life has been narrated. For the religious training, *inter alia*, it also holds weekly meetings in different cities and towns of Pakistan and even in some European cities as well. The members of the DI have to show their commitment to the Islamic way of life as reflected in the *Faīdān-i-Sunnat*. Besides religious sector, it is also working in social and educational fields. Although it is supported with reference to its aims to build character in its individual members, it nevertheless attracts diverse criticism about some of its practices.

Keywords: *Barelwi, Da‘wah, Faīdān-i-Madīnah, Faīdān-i-Sunnat, Ilās Qādirī*

Introduction

The failure of the 1857 War of Independence witnessed the political, social and economic decay in the Muslim institutions of India. As a result, in self-evaluation, the ‘*ulamā*’ (pl. of ‘*ālim*, scholars), began to examine causes of the Indian Muslims’ decline, the rising influence of Hindus and coming into power of the British. They also had serious concerns about the missionary activities of the Christian and the reformist and revivalist Hindu organizations. The ‘*ulamā*’ were of the opinion that Christian missionaries, with the help of the British Government, were bent upon eliminating Islam from India. Fearing a drastic change in the Muslim mode of life, the ‘*ulamā*’ decided to take refuge in religious education for which they started establishing *madāris* (pl. of *madrāsah*, religious seminaries), which were financially and administratively independent. The main purpose

*Correspondence concerning this article should be addresses Dr Mujeeb Ahmad, Associate Professor, Chair, Department of History and Pakistan Studies, International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan at ahmadphdbarelwi@yahoo.com

of establishing *madāris* was to retain the Muslim legacy of religious education and safeguard the religious life of the Indian Muslims.¹

Although the conclusion drawn by the '*ulamā*' was in practice even before 1857, however they still hoped against the hope and thought that for the survival of Islamic way of life in the British India (1858-1947), this was the only way *i.e.* to call Islam for help. So, every Muslim religious group of the British India performed its due role in this process of seeking panacea for their followers.

2. Da'wah activities of the Barelwis in the British India: A Brief Survey

The Barelwis are *Hanafti* (followers of the *Hanafti* School of Islamic Law) and the Islam preached and practiced by them is known as 'popular,' 'folk-oriented,' '*Ṣūfī*-inspired,' and even 'rural Islam.' The Barelwi '*ulamā*' and *mashā'ikh* (pl. of *shaykh*) offer social and religious guidance to the majority of the South Asian *Hanafti* Muslims. Besides, they struggled to counter the missionary activities of the Hindus and the Christians.

By the end of 1922, Arya Samajist Hindus re-started the socio-religious reform and to proselytize *Shuddhi* ('state of purity') Movement in the north of the British India. This (re)conversion procedure, inspired by classical Hinduism, also attempted to introduce proselytizing techniques particular to Islam and Christianity. In the eyes of the Arya Samajists, the Hindu decline was manifested not only in qualitative, but also in quantitative terms as most of the Hindus from the untouchable castes were converted to Islam and Christianity.² The Arya Samajists started the *Shuddhi* Movement in order to counter the missionary activities of the Muslims and the Christians.

The *Shuddhi* Movement was perceived by the Muslims as a serious threat for the beliefs of the poor and border-line Muslims, especially for the newly converted Malkanah Rajputs living in the western part of the Uttar Pradesh and eastern parts of Rajputana. The *Jama'at Radā-i-Muṣṭafah* (December 1920)-(JRM), according to H. B. Khan (1922-n.d), accepted this challenge first of all, and on 27 January, 1923, sent a ten-member delegation under the leadership of Mawlānā Shah Muḥammad Muṣṭafah Raza Khan Barelwi (1892-1981) to the affected areas.³

¹Mushirul Haq, "The 'Ulama' and the Indian Politics," in *Islam In South Asia*, ed. Rashid Ahmad (Jullundhri) and Muhammad Afzal Qarshi (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1995), 77-78.

²Christophe Jaffrelot, *Religion, Caste and Politics in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 145-46.

³H. B. Khan, *Barr-i-Saghīr Pak-o-Hind kī Sīyāsat main 'ulamā' kā kirdār* (Islamabad: Qūmī Idārah Bara'e Tehqīq Tārīkh-o-Thiqāfat, 1985), 264-65.

The delegation visited districts of Meerut, Bulandshahr, Aligarh, Agra, Mathra, Etah, Attawa and Baisalpur. Owing to the missionary activities of the delegation and JRM's workers, about four lakh Muslims were saved from re-conversion to Hinduism.⁴

Besides *Tabligh*, a counter Muslim missionary movement started by Khawajah Hassan Nizāmī⁵ (1878-1955) and Mawlānā Muḥammad Qiyamuddīn 'Abdul Bari of Farangi Mahal (1878-1926), the *Shuddhi* challenge of apostasy was also dealt with by other Bareilwi 'ulamā', *mashā'ikh* and organizations as they sent *tablighī* (missionary) delegations to the affected areas of Etah, Aligarh, Delhi, Bulandshahr, Rohtak, Farrukhabad, Mathra, Garganwan and Agra and more than ten thousand people were saved from the influence of the *Shuddhi* Movement.⁶

In 1901, Pir Sayyīd Jama'at 'Ali Shah 'Alipūrī (1841-1951) founded Markazi Anjuman-i-Khuddāmūl Šūfiā'i-Hind (MAKSH) with the aims of *inter alia*, to preach Islamic and *Sufi* teachings and to counter the theoretical and practical activities of anti-Islam and anti-Sufism sects. The MAKSH established more than forty-five *madāris* and mosques in the districts of Delhi, Agra, Etah, Bulandshahr, Aligarh, Rohtak, Farrukhabad, Mathra and Garganwan to provide religious education for children, women and adults. It was claimed by the MAKSH that due to its workers' efforts, numerous people were saved from the influence of the *Shuddhi* Movement.⁷

Mawlānā Sayyīd Ghulām Bhik Nairang Ambalwi (1876-1952) formed the Ambala-based *Jam'iyat Markaziyah Tabligh ul-Islam* in July 1923 as a safeguard of Islam through countering the *Shuddhi* Movement and apostasy and educating and training the illiterate Muslims. This *Jam'iyat* was very active in the affected areas of the Panjāb, Uttar Pradesh and Rajputana during the *Shuddhi* Movement.⁸

⁴Muḥammad Shahabbuddīn Raḍwī, *Hadur Mufti-i-A'zam-i-Hind kē siyāsī Afkar* (Bombay: Raḍā Academy, 1999), 72-76.

⁵Khawajah Hassan Nizāmī in the wake of *Shuddhi* Movement penned a number of handbills, posters and pamphlets and distributed them among Muslims in order to warn them of the *Shuddhi* Movement; Yoginder Sikand, *The Origins and Development of the Tablighi-Jama'at (1920-2000) A Cross-Country Comparative Study* (New Delhi: Orient Longman Private Limited, 2002), 49-53.

⁶Muḥammad Shahabbuddīn Raḍwī, *Tārīkh Jama'at Raḍā-i-Muṣṭafah* (Bombay: Raḍā Academy, 1995), 213-33, 236-77; Sayyīd Akhtar Ḥusaīn and Muḥammad Ṭāhir Fārūqī, eds. *Sīrat-i-Amīr-i-Millat* (Alipur Sayyidan: Šāhibzādah al-Hajj Pīr Sayyīd Akhtar Ḥusaīn Shah, 1990), 425-29, 432-39, 442-43; Muḥammad 'Abdul Majid Khan, ed. *Pīr Sayyīd Muḥammad Jama'at 'Ali Shah kē Mukhtaṣar Qūmī Karnamae* (Agra: Agra Akhbar Press, 1925), 13-15 and fortnightly *al-Faqīh* (Amritsar), 5 June 1923, 9-11.

⁷Ḥusaīn, *Sīrat-i-Amīr-i-Millat*, 426-40 and *al-Faqīh*, 5 January 1924, 10; 20 February 1924, 10 and 28 July 1924, 11.

⁸Muḥammad Jalaluddīn Qādirī, *Fitnah-i-Irtidād* (Kharian: Dar-i-Sa'adat, n. d.), 54-55 and Moinuddin Aqeel (comp.), *Resurgence of Muslim Separatism in British India: A Selection of Unpublished Correspondence Between Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Mir Ghulam Bhik Nairang* (Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan, 2001), 5-6.

An inaugural session of the *al-Jam'iyat al-'Aliyyat al-Islamiyyat al-Markaziyyah* commonly known as All-India Sunni Conference (AISC) was held in March, 1925 at Moradabad. Among its other aims and objectives, the *tablīghī* work among the Muslims and non-Muslims was the most important to mention.

In his welcome address, Mawlānā Shah Muḥammad Ḥāmid Raza Khan Barelwi (1875-1943), the president of the Reception Committee of the AISC, according to his understanding, pointed out some ignominious social evils prevailing among the Indian Muslims. For their social and religious uplift, the Mawlānā identified four major fields of work. According to him, *tablīghī*, religious education, sense of security and social reforms were the only remedies.⁹ Referring to the *Shuddhi* Movement and anti-Muslim attitude of the Hindus, Mawlānā Ḥāmid Raza Khan proposed to have a *tablīghī* network at the grass root level.¹⁰ He also proposed to establish a central *madrasattabligh* (school for missionary training), in order to train religious teachers, *manazir* (religious debaters) and preachers. This *madrasattabligh* was also supposed to be responsible for regularizing and monitoring the whole *tablīghī* work and educating the adults, youngsters, students of Western educational institutions and children by establishing small *madāris* at every village, town and city. Mawlānā Ḥāmid Raza Khan also narrated the importance of establishing a central *dāruḥ iftā'* (board of issuing fatwa) and *dāruḥ tasniyf* (board of research and writing) as supportive organs for the *tablīghī*.¹¹

3. Da'wah Activities of the Barelwis in Pakistan: A Glimpse

The social structure of the Muslim society in Pakistan has been profoundly influenced and shaped by the popular Islam. The vast majority of Pakistani people steeped in traditional religious mode of thought and action. Here Barelwis' influence has been prevalent largely among rural population, mainly due to their strong affiliation with different *Sufī* Orders. However, they do have a considerable number of devoted followers in urban areas. Grass-root level-celebrations of the *Milādul Nabī* [birth celebration of the Prophet Muḥammad (SAW)], *mahafil-i-nā'a't* [meetings arranged to pay salutation to the Prophet Muḥammad (SAW)], *ā'rās* (annual death ceremonies of a *Ṣūfī* / *'ālim*) and other religious ceremonies, *khanqahs* (hospices) and some social services are working as a *da'wah* tools for mobilizing Pakistani Barelwis on religious grounds and making the Barelwi network broader and stronger. Barelwi *madāris*, religio-political and social organizations, series of ideological literature, spiritual bonds and chains of *tariyqat* (sufism), system of issuance of talismans, print, electronic media and Internet are also playing their due role in enhancing the hold of popular Islam in Pakistani society. Nevertheless, *khanqahs* and mosques are a main source of socio-political as well as

⁹Muḥammad Jalaluddīn Qādirī, *Khutbat-i-All-India Sunnī Kanfarans: 1925 ta 1947* (Gujrat: Maktabah-i-Raḍwīyyah, 1978), 140-42.

¹⁰Ibid., 143-45.

¹¹Ibid., 146-51 and Muḥammad Jalaluddīn Qādirī, *Tārīkh-i-All-India Sunnī Kanfarans: 1925 ta 1947* (Kharian: Sa'īd Baradaran, 1999), 38.

economic status of the 'ulamā,' especially Barelwis. The broad acceptance of this Islam is mainly due to the fact that it provides a chance to do catharsis vis-à-vis the daily problems of the masses.

Although, in January and March 1948 the Barelwi *Mashā'ikh* and 'ulamā' formed *Jam'īyyatul Mashā'ikh* and *Markazi Jam'īyyatul 'Ulamā'-i-Pakistan* (MJUP) as their religio-political parties, respectively, however their main field of work remained the teaching and preaching of Islam.

After the creation of Pakistan in August 1947, the Barelwi 'ulamā' with the consultation of the Indian Barelwi 'ulamā', decided to establish *Idārah-i-Tablīgh*, under the supervision of Mawlānā 'Abdul Hāmid Badāyūnī (1898-1970) in order to continue the religious and *tablīghī* activities of the AISC.¹²

By April 1955, the MJUP also decided to reactivate its *tablīghī* wing *Bazm-i-Tanzīm* under the leadership of Mawlānā Ghulām Muḥammad Tarannum (1900-59). The *Bazm* was supposed to publish tracts and pamphlets for the education and training of the Pakistanis related to the Islamic rituals and to inculcate in them the love for *Allah* and the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him).¹³

An international missionary organization, World Federation of Islamic Missions (WFIM), vowing to have comprehensive program of service for the Muslims, was established in August 1958 by Dr Muḥammad Fazlur Rahman al-Ansari al-Qādirī (1914-74). The main objectives of the WFIM were *inter alia*, to establish Islamic missions and other humanitarian institutions in different countries for the propagation of Islam; to establish institutions for training Islamic missionaries, scholars and Muslim social workers; to conduct research on Islam and other religions and ideologies; and to publish literature propagating the cause of Islam.¹⁴ The WFIM has steered its activities according to its objectives and has established *inter alia*, The 'Alimiyyah Institute of Islamic Studies in 1958 at Karachi, Pakistan. Since May 1964, it has been publishing a bi-lingual monthly journal *The Minaret International* that carries articles on different aspects of Islam and Islamic way of life. The current president of the WFIM is Muṣṭafah Faḍīl Ansari, the elder son of Dr al-Qādirī.

On 25 November, 1961, at Lyallpur (now Faisalabad), a meeting of the Barelwi 'ulamā' was held where it was decided to form *Markazī Idārah-i-Ta'mīr-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat Pakistan*. The aims and objectives of the *Idārah* were to propagate the teachings of the

¹²Sayyīd Ghulām Mu'īnuddīn Na'imī, ed. *Hayat-i-Sadrul Afāḍil* (Lahore: Idārah Na'imīyyah Raḍwīyyah, Swad-i-A'zam, n. d.), 240-41.

¹³Sayyīd Ahmad Sa'id Kaẓīmī, ed. *T'āruf Jam'īyyatul 'Ulamā'-i-Pakistan* (Lahore: Hakīm Ghulām Mu'īnuddīn Na'imī, n. d.), 11.

¹⁴For details see, monthly *The Minaret* (Karachi), October 1998, (Special Issue). For the constitution of the WFIM see, Umair Mahmood Siddiqui, (comp.), *The Beacon Light* (Karachi: Islamic Research and Publications Bureau, 2015), 392-413.

Qur'ān and *Sunnah* (the way of Holy Prophet) and to reform the Pakistani society accordingly.¹⁵ The *Idārah* has tried to curtail the activities of the Christian missionaries; published several *tablīghī* tracts; and reconverted more than one 1000 people to Islam who embraced Christianity.¹⁶

Barelwi 'ulamā' of Karachi, after June 1962, formed *Markazī Anjuman-i-Tablīghul Islām* with the sole aim and objective of preaching of Islam. Mawlānā 'Abdul Ḥāmid Badāyūnī was its president while Mawlānā Muḥammad Shafī' Okrāwī (1929-84) was its *Nāzim-i-A'lā* (secretary general).¹⁷

The Barelwi 'ulamā' of Lahore under the leadership of Mawlānā Muḥammad Sa'īd Aḥmad Naqshbandī in 1971, formed a *Sunnī Tablīghī Jamā'at Pakistan* in order to propagate the teachings of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*, revive and safeguard the mission of the *Ṣūfiya*, to counter the then prevailing secular ideas and to reform the social and moral values of the Pakistani society. The *Jamā'at* held its weekly meetings in the Bilal Mosque and distributed faith oriented literature.¹⁸

The most important and active organization for the worldwide propagation of Islam was established in January 1973 at Makkah. The leading Pakistani and Indian Barelwi 'ulamā', in a meeting held on the occasion of *Hajj*, decided to establish the, *al-dawa'at Islāmīyyah al-'ālamīyyah* better known as World Islamic Mission (WIM).¹⁹ Mawlānā Shah Ahmad Nūrānī Ṣiddīqī (1926-2003) then president of the *Jam'īyyat-i-'Ulamā'-i-Pakistan* (JUP), was nominated as the head of the Mission. Eventually, the World Islamic Mission has grown to serve the cause of Islam and Muslims across Europe, the United States of America, North America, Africa and Asia. For the accomplishment of its mission, an Islamic Missionary College was established at Bradford, United Kingdom (UK) on 30 July 1974, which was followed by the establishment of more schools and *masājid* mostly almost all over the Europe.²⁰ The headquarters of the Mission is in Manchester, UK. Presently, Shah Muḥammad Anas Nūrānī Ṣiddīqī Madanī (b.1966), the elder son of Mawlānā Nūrānī is the head of the Mission.

The WIM stands for the promotion and propagation of Islamic message and knowledge, inculcation of love and respect for the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) and enhancement of social development of the Muslims. The Mission's Welfare Trust vows to help needy people, especially the Muslims around the World.

¹⁵Fortnightly *Riḍwān* (Lahore), 2 December 1961, 15-16.

¹⁶Monthly *Riḍwān* (Lahore), July-August 1975, 5-6.

¹⁷Monthly *Sou-i-Hijaz* (Lahore), July 2002, 34-35.

¹⁸Muḥammad Sa'īd Aḥmad Naqshbandī, ed. *Chalīs Isbaq* (Lahore: Sunnī Tablīghī Jamā'at Pakistan, 1972), 7-9, 16-17.

¹⁹Monthly *Raḍā-i-Muṣṭafah* (Gujranwala), February 1974, 12-13.

²⁰Fortnightly *Nida-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat* (Lahore), 16-31 January 1992, 5-8 and monthly *Ahwal-o-Athar* (Lahore), December 1997, 9-11.

Dr Muḥammad Ṭāhirul Qādirī (b. 1951), for the worldwide propagation of Islam founded the *Idārah-i-Minhājūl Qur'ān* in October 1980 at Lahore.²¹ The *Idārah*, now with an international exposure, has worldwide followers and a long list of publications, besides its own online Minhāj TV network, started in July 2011 from Paris, France.

Mawlānā Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Qādirī (b. 1961), in February 2001 formed the *Tablīgh-i-Islāmī* (TI) for the preaching of Islam. Lahore-based TI is a relatively new *da'wah* organization of the Barelwis working in major cities of Pakistan and addresses almost all the strata of the society.²²

Dr Farida Ahmad Ṣiddīqī (1935-2013) younger sister of Mawlānā Nūrānī, most probably was the first woman, who started *da'wah* activities for the Pakistani women. She founded Karachi-based Khawatin Islamic Mission in 1959, for the religious education and training of women. The Mission also has its branches in some European countries and runs an Islamic University for Women which was established in 1990 at Karachi.²³

Besides, all these institutionalized *da'wah* activities, almost every *madrāsah* has its own *da'wah* center from where the gross root level of *da'wah* activities are been done.

4. Da'wat-i-Islami

In September 1981, a meeting of leading Barelwi 'ulamā' and some leaders of the JUP was held in Karachi where the need for a Barelwi 'tablīghī organization was seriously felt. 'Allāmah Arshadul Qādirī (1924-2002), an Indian Barelwi 'ālim suggested the name of the DI and Mawlānā Muḥammad Wiqārūddīn Qādirī Raḍwī (1915-92) proposed the name of Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī as the head of the DI.²⁴ Thus, DI was launched in September 1981 with the motto, 'love for the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) and Madīnah.' According to the directives of the DI, every member has to take oath that

²¹For the introduction of *Idārah-i-Minhājūl Qur'ān* see, Muḥammad Ṭāhirul Qādirī, *Tehrik-i-Minhājūl Qur'ān* (Lahore: Minhājūl Qur'ān Publications, 1996) and Muḥammad Rafiq, *Tehrik-i-Minhājūl Qur'ān kē ibtadā'ī' pandrah sāl* (Lahore: Minhājūl Qur'ān Publications, 1998).

²²Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Qādirī, *Tablīgh-i-dīn kī Darurat wa Ahmiyyat* (Lahore: Maktabatul al-Islam, n. d.), 14-16.

²³Muḥammad Yunas Qādirī, "Daktar Faridah Ahmad Ṣiddīqī kī khidmāt kā aik Ajmali Jā'izah," in *'Azim Mubaligh-i-Islām* (Karachi: Khawatin Islāmī Mission, 2003), 124-32; monthly *Faiḍān* (Faisalabad), February 1978, 18-19 and weekly *Ahwal* (Karachi), 4-16 June 1989, 26, 34.

²⁴Monthly *Jahān-i-Raḍā* (Lahore), April 2011, 86-87, (*Da'wat-i-Islāmī nambar*). The meeting was held at the residence of Mawlānā Nūrānī then president of the JUP and was presided at by 'Allāmah Sayyīd Ahmad Sa'id Shah Kazimī (1913-86), the founder *Nāzim-i-A'lā* of the MJUP. However, the DI did not own this statement and considered Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī as a founder of the DI. Markazi Majlis-i-Shura, *Da'wat-i-Islāmī kā T'arūf* (Karachi: Maktabatul al-Madīnah, n. d.), 1-2 and *Jahān-i-Raḍā*, November-December 2005, 36-40. According to Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī, 'Allāmah Arshadul Qādirī changed this name by *Sunnī Tablīghī Jamā'at*, which was unacceptable for me and I continued my missionary work under the name of the DI. *Jahān-i-Raḍā*, April 2011, 182-90.

I must try to rectify myself and the people of the whole World. To rectify ourselves, we will act upon the *Madanī In 'āmāt* (a card of daily manual) and to rectify the people of the whole World we will travel in the *Madani Qāfilah* (missionary journey/walk in the form of caravan).²⁵

Mawlānā Abu Bilal Muḥammad Ilīās Qādirī (b.1950) belongs to a Karachi-based Memon family. He is a *murīd* (spiritual disciple) of Sialkot born Mawlānā Muḥammad Dī'auddīn Ahmad Qādirī Madanī (1877-1981),²⁶ and one and the only *khālīfah* (vicegerent) of Mawlānā Wiqāruddīn Qādirī.²⁷ Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī not a formal *'ālim*, right from his childhood was a religious minded person. In his early life, he was active in various Barelwi religious organizations like *Jama'at-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat Pakistan* (1956) and *Anjuman-i-Talābah 'i-Islam* (January 1968). With this affiliation, he used to study the books written by Barelwi *'ulamā'*, particularly of Mawlānā Shah Muḥammad Ahmad Raza Khan Barelwi (1856-1921). During these days, he also remained associated with Mawlānā Wiqāruddīn Qādirī more than twenty years.²⁸ Before the formal formation of the DI, Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī visited Sri Lanka during February-May 1980 as his first-ever foreign *tablīghī* visit.²⁹ Nowadays, among his followers, Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī is known as the *Amīr-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat* (leader of the Sunnis), *walī-i-kamil* (perfect and pious person), and even one of the *mujaddadīn* (renewers) of the fifteenth century A.H.³⁰

The DI was founded on the principles of *da'wah* to follow the *Sunnah* in order to be virtuous. Its aims are 'to promote and deepen the love for the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) and the early Muslim community of Madīnah'. The movement stands for the revival and resurgence of Islam through peaceful preaching. Its main characteristic is to preach 'what is righteous and what is forbidden' and to reform the lives of Muslims according to the teachings of the *Sharī'ah* (Islamic Law).³¹ The members of the DI are so keen on following the *Sunnan* (pl. of *Sunnah*) that they always wear white clothes, a Green

²⁵These journeys / walks are of three, eight, 12 and 30 days.

²⁶Abu Bilal Muḥammad Ilīās 'attar Qādirī Raḍwī, *Sayyidī Qutub-i-Madīnah* (Karachi: Maktabatul al-Madīnah, n. d.), 4-5.

²⁷Ibid., 1-2. He also has his *bay'at* in four famous *Sufī* orders namely *Qādirīyah*, *Chishtīyah*, *Suhrawardīyah* and *Naqshbandīyah*.

²⁸Abu Kalīm Fānī, *Mukhtaṣar Tadhkīrah Mashā'ikh-i-Qādirīyah Raḍwīyyah 'attārīyyah* (Lahore: Muslim Kitābwī, 2004), 148.

²⁹Muḥammad Waṣīm Qādirī, *Amīr Da'wat-i-Islāmī kī khidmāt* (Lahore: 'Ilmī Publishers, n. d.), 67-68.

³⁰Ibid., 48-50 and Malik 'adil Raḍā, *Ihya' i-Sunnat maīn Amīr-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat aūr Da'wat-i-Islāmī kī kirdār* (Lahore: Haqq Publications, n. d.), 57. DI took Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī as a *mujaddid* in the sense that he revived several *Sunnan*.

³¹Shu'bah Iṣlāhī Kutub, *T'arūf Amīr-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat* (Karachi: Maktabatul al-Madīnah, 2007), 4.

turban (previously it was dark Brown)³² and a *miswāk* (a wooden stick used in place of a toothbrush) in their pockets.³³

The class-orientation of the DI is mainly middle and lower middle strata of the Pakistani society living in rural and urban areas of the country. The people having different age groups and socio-economic background are also associated with the DI. As far as rest of the world is concerned, mostly young generation is interested in it. The *Ḥanafī* School of Law is the official school of the movement, so it is very rare that followers of the other Muslim Schools of Law can be counted among its members. The DI hardly involve itself into inter and intra sects conflicts.

5. Expansion of the DI

During its early days, the DI held its weekly meetings at the Kharadar Mosque, Karachi then at its former center, Gulzar-i-Ḥabīb Mosque (1973), Soldier Bazar, Karachi every Thursday after the evening prayer. After recitation from the *Qur'ān* and the salutation for the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him), one of its preachers would give a speech on a spiritual and moral topic, followed by a speech of Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī, through which he used to explain solutions of day-to-day problems in terms of Islamic law. The following day, after the Friday prayer, a small group of preachers, under the leadership of Mawlānā Qādirī, visited other areas of Karachi. They offered the remaining prayers at the central mosque of the area. Mawlānā Qādirī briefed local residents about the basic teachings of Islam between prayers.³⁴ During these days, the *muballighin* (preachers) of the DI used to give *darūs* (lectures) from the Urdu translation of *Mukashaftul Qulūb* (the exposition of the hearts) written by Abu Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Ghazzalī (1058-1111).³⁵

The DI expanded rapidly in Karachi in one year's time, as the weekly meetings began to be held in some three hundred mosques.³⁶ Nowadays, the central weekly *ijtimā'* (gathering) is held every Thursday after *Maghrib* (evening) prayers at international center

³²From the JUP side, it was claimed that the color of turban was changed on the directions of the JUP leadership, just to differentiate with the followers of Mawlānā Nūrānī. Quarterly *Anwar-i-Rida* (Joharabad), October-December 2009, 495-96. However, being a *Qādirī Shaykh*, Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī also uses brown *chadar*. In February 2018, the DI allowed his followers to wear turban of any one among these seven colors (Black, Dark Grey, Yellow, Saffron, White, Red-stripped and Green) used by the Prophet. *Open Letter of Muḥammad Ilīās Qādirī, dated 23 February 2018*.

³³For details see, Sayyīd Faīd 'abbas Qamar, *Ittiba' Sunnat-i-Nabawwī aūr Da'wat-i-Islāmī* (Lahore: Muslim Kitābwī, 2000) and Raḍā, *Ihya'-i-Sunnat maīn Amīr-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat kā kirdār*.

³⁴It is stated that at the beginning, Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī used to travel by buses, trains and even on foot, having his food with him. He also used to visit patients, gave bath to the corpses and led their funeral prayers as a part of his *da'wah* strategy. Shu'bah Amīr-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat, Majlis al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyah, *Tadhkirah-i-Amīr-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat, Qist (1)* (Karachi: Maktabatul al-Madīnah, 2008), 6-7.

³⁵*Jahān-i-Rida*, November - December 2005, 42.

³⁶Qādirī, *Amīr Da'wat-i-Islāmī kī khidmāt*, 73-76.

of the DI, *Faīdān-i-Madīnah* (Blessings of Madīnah) (May 2005), Karachi.³⁷ The movement expanded quietly in the Sindh and later throughout Pakistan. It then became conspicuous and influential, and kept on spreading over more than 180 countries of the world, including Middle East, thus constituting a veritably transnational *tablighī* movement.

6. Contribution of the DI

DI struggles for the implementation of the *Nizām-i-Muṣṭafah* i.e. the *dīn* (system) given by as well as through the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) by peaceful preaching of the *Sunnah* to establish an Islamic society in Pakistan.³⁸ In addition to the weekly meetings in the various large and small cities and towns of Pakistan, its annual *ijtimā'* in different metropolitan areas of Pakistan and even in Europe are held. Thus far, it has held annual meetings in Karachi, Hyderabad, Lahore, and Multan.³⁹ The DI established secretariats in both Karachi and Lahore, naming them *Faīdān-i-Madīnah*.⁴⁰ In nearly every city of Pakistan, the DI has established religious schools⁴¹ and libraries. On 11 March

³⁷In these *ijtimā'āt*, besides normal performing of Islamic rituals, recitation from the *Qur'ān, na't*, reformatory speeches, repentance, *zīkr*, imagination, and visualization of Madīnah, *salām, du'ā*, education and training of the participants are the main features. Daily *Jang* (Lahore), 11 April 2008.

³⁸For its 'non-political', 'non-extremist' and 'non-terrorist' state of affairs, the DI very proudly acknowledge different letters of appreciation issued by some former Pakistani Ministries of Religious Affairs, Zakat and Ushr, Defense and Interior. Letters of Syed Asad Murtaza Gilani (1968-2015) Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Zakat and Ushr, No. 1(1) PS/2004, Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Zakat and Ushr, Islamabad, dated 11 September 2006, Rao Sikandar Iqbal (1943-2010) Senior Federal Minister for Defence, No. 5/1/DM/2007, Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Defence, Rawalpindi dated 8 October 2007, Ch. Zafar Iqbal Warrich Minister of State for Interior, Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Interior, Islamabad, dated 15 November 2007 ; Syed Khursheed Ahmed Shah Minister of Religious Affairs, Zakat and Ushr, Government of Pakistan, Islamabad, No. 1(1)Gen/MRA/2008, 30 May 2008 and Pir Noor-Ul-Haq Qadri (b.1970) Federal Minister of Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony, Government of Pakistan, Islamabad, 24.06.2019.

³⁹It is claimed by the DI, that after Hajj, its annual *ijtimā'* was the second largest gathering of Muslims. Markazi Majlis-i-Shura, *Da'wat-i-Islāmī kā t'āruf*, 16. However, due to security reasons, the annual *ijtimā'* is not being held since 2008. Instead of 'open', DI preferred to hold indoor *ijtimā'āt*.

⁴⁰Ibid., 4.

⁴¹The first-ever of its kind was established in 1995 at New Karachi with the name of *Jāmi'ah al-Madīnah*. Till 2015, there were 207 male *Jāmi'ah al-Madīnah* working not only in Pakistan but also in India, UK, South Africa, Nepal, Kenya and Bangladesh with an enrollment of 14,343 students and 1,107 teachers. Likewise, there are 195 female *Jāmi'ah al-Madīnah* working not only in Pakistan but also in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh with an enrollment of 12,389 students. Besides, *Dars-i-Nizāmī*, some selected *Jāmi'ah al-Madīnah* also offers short courses in Islamic Jurisprudence, computer, Arabic and English languages. Markazi Majlis-i-Shura, *Da'wat-i-Islāmī kā t'āruf*, 32.

2013, the President of Pakistan gave his assent to the Act of Parliament (No. V of 2013) for the establishment of Dar-ul-Madina International University (DMIU), a project of the DI. The principal seat of the DMIU is in Islamabad and it can establish its campuses, colleges, institutes, offices, research or study centers and other facilities in Pakistan and abroad. The DMIU is supposed to be open for all persons and for all types of knowledge.⁴² The establishment of the university can be taken as another bold step for transforming DI into a transnational educational movement as well.

DI has its own edifying literature, the most important of which is *Faiḍān-i-Sunnat* (Blessings of the *Sunnah*), compiled by Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī. In this voluminous work, Mawlānā Qādirī narrated the *Sunnat* of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) regarding affairs of daily life. According to Wasīm Qādirī, *Faiḍān-i-Sunnat* is the most popular book after the *Qur'ān* (in Pakistan).⁴³ Besides *Faiḍān-i-Sunnat*, some booklets, lectures and speeches of Mawlānā Qādirī recorded on audio cassettes and CDs in different international and South Asian regional languages are also regarded a source of inspiration for the members of the DI. The DI also publishes works by other Barelwi 'ulamā', particularly of Mawlānā Ahmad Raza Khan Barelwi to whom Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī has very strong ideological affiliation.

Although, the *Markazi Majlis-i-Shura* (central consultative body), as a supreme body has a considerable hold on the DI's members and more than ninety different departments from the very beginning, it has been a centralized movement, revolving around the personality of Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī. The center in Karachi authorizes *amīrs* of provinces, cities, and towns to work in accordance with the directions of the center. Local *amīrs* come regularly to the center for training and guidance. The DI organizes different courses for the education and training of its preachers.⁴⁴ For remaining in close contact with the different branches of the DI, Mawlānā Qādirī used to travel regularly all over Pakistan. Nowadays, this practice is continued by Abu Asayyid Ahmad 'ubaid Raza (b.1980) the elder son of Mawlānā Qādirī and some senior members of the movement. The members must show their commitment to the Islamic way of life as is reflected compendiously in the *Faiḍān-i-Sunnat*. Every male member is required to participate in the twelve *madanī kām* (personal rituals) arranged by the local units besides performing more than forty personal duties.⁴⁵ Every male member have to fill *Madanī In'āmāt* containing seventy-two directives for his daily performance and have to hand it over to the local *zimahdar* (focal person) of the DI

⁴²*The Gazette of Pakistan (Extraordinary)*, Islamabad, March 14, 2013, 99-106.

⁴³Qādirī, *Amīr Da'wat-i-Islāmī kī khidmāt*, 118.

⁴⁴Markazi Majlis-i-Shura, *Da'wat-i-Islāmī kā t'arūf*, 38-39.

⁴⁵ Sayyid Rashid 'Alī Gardaīzī, *Amīr-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat aūr Da'wat-i-Islāmī* (Rawalpindi: Anjuman-i-Taraqī-i-'ilm, n. d.), 54-58. Among these *madanī kām*, daily call for the *fajar* prayer, daily *dars* from *Faiḍān-i-Sunnat* at any shop, office or roadside and full day *i'tikāf* on Friday are most important to point out.

within the first ten days of every Islamic month.⁴⁶ The center discourages the reading and discussing of anything other than the *Faīdān-i-Sunnat* in the meetings. In addition to male participants, it has a considerable enrollment of Pakistani women, children, calling them *madanī munnay* (kids) and even jinns are *murīd* and members of the DI.⁴⁷

As it is a *da'wah* movement, there is no membership fee in the DI. All expenditures incurred in the movement are mostly met by generous donations of DI's well-wishers, living all over the World. *Zakat* (compulsory alms), *ṣadqāt* (pl. of *ṣadaqah*, voluntarily alms) including *ṣadaqah-i-fiṭr* (alms for *'idul fiṭr*) and hides of sacrificial animals on *'id-i-qurbān* (*'id of sacrifice*) is another major source of the DI's income.⁴⁸

7. Da'wah Methodology and Approach of the DI

The DI has very strong and effective network for religious mobilization and training of its followers. It has more than ninety departments for the social and religious services of the community.⁴⁹ For example, in the religious field, the DI has established *Majlis-i-Tehqīqat-i-Sharī'ah* (research council of Islamic Law) and *Dārul iftā' Ahl-i-Sunnat* (Ahl-i-Sunnat's board of issuing fatwa) at Karachi in November 2000, from where everybody can ask for fatwa, even on the mobile phone. This *dārul iftā'* gives *fatāwā* (pl. of fatwa) in Arabic, English and Urdu languages. In addition, it gives practical training for giving fatwa

⁴⁶ Abu Bilal Muḥammad Ilyas 'attar Qādirī Raḍwī, *Bīyānāt-i-'aṭṭārīyyah*, Vol. 1 (Karachi: Maktabatul al-Madīnah, n. d.), 256. However, for women, *Madanī In 'āmāt* contains 63 directives. *63 Madanī In 'āmāt* (Karachi: Maktabatul al-Madīnah, n. d.). For male and female adult students of *dīnī* education, *Madanī In 'āmāt* are 92 and 83 respectively. Whereas, for male and female child students of *dīnī* education, *Madanī In 'āmāt* are 40 and for deaf and dumb these are 27. Majlis al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, *Naū Muslim kī dard bharī Dastan* (Karachi: Maktabatul al-Madīnah, n. d.), 12.

⁴⁷ Majlis al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, *Quam-i-Jinnāt aūr Amīr-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat* (Karachi: Maktabatul al-Madīnah, 2007), 62-64 and Markazi Majlis-i-Shura, *Da'wat-i-Islāmī kā t'arūf*, 5-6. According to latest available data, the DI claimed that only in March 2012, more than 52,157 daily *darūs* for women were held at homes throughout Pakistan. Similarly, more than 115,175 women attended the local level weekly 4,521 gatherings. The women's wing of the DI is under the control of daughter of Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī.

⁴⁸ Telephonic conversation with one of members of the *Markazi Majlis-i-Shura* of the DI, who wanted to remain anonymous, dated 26 February 2011. However, according to a press report, during the month of Ramadan (August 2011), over Rs. 20 million were collected only from the Pakistan Air Force for the DI. Daily *The Express Tribune* (Karachi), 12 September 2011.

⁴⁹ Some important *majālis*, as DI calls them are, *Majlis Madanī Qāfilē* (in and outside Pakistan); *Majlis Ta'mīr-i-Masājīd*; *Majlis Jail Khānahjāt*; *Majlis Maktūbāt wa Ta'wīdhat-i-'aṭṭārīyyah* / also on Online; *Majlis Istikhārah*; *Majlis* for training of *Hujjāj*; *Majlis Dārul iftā'* (also on telephone and Internet); *Majlis Nashr-o-Ishā'at*; *Majlis* for weekly *ijtimā'āt* (in and outside Pakistan) and *Majlis Rābiṭah bil 'ulamā' wa mashā'ikh*. *Jang*, 11 April 2008. For the duties of these *majālis* see, Gardaīzī, *Amīr-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat aūr Da'wat-i-Islāmī*, 51-55.

to the youngsters. Most of the *fatāwā* issued by *dārul iftā' Ahl-i-Sunnat* are published.⁵⁰ Besides, online services are also available for seeking fatwa, *ta'wīdh* (amulet)⁵¹ and even becoming a *murīd* of Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī by clicking www.dawateislami.net.⁵² The DI has also established its own research oriented publishing house with the name of *al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah* from where the literature related to the DI and the other Barelwi '*ulamā*' is being printed and distributed all over the World. In the social sector, its services are extended even in the jails where the prisoners are being educated and trained in the light of Islamic teachings along with the distribution of some necessities of daily life.⁵³ It has also established small hospital in Karachi⁵⁴ that tries to divert peoples' attention towards spiritual treatment of their physical and socio-economic problems.⁵⁵

After the devastating earthquake of October 2005 and heavy floods of July 2010 in Pakistan, the DI provided rehabilitation services in the affected areas. From Hajj 2008, DI also started, as a regular feature of its strategy to train the intending pilgrims. In September 2008, it established its own *Madanī* TV Channel. This Channel is a breakthrough in the *da'wah* approach and methodology of the DI.⁵⁶ In January 2017, it also launched a monthly

⁵⁰*Fatāwā-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat Nambar 1* (Karachi: al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, n. d.); *Fatāwā-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat Nambar 2* (Karachi: al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, 2002); *Fatāwā-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat Nambar 3* (Karachi: al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, n. d.); *Fatāwā-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat Nambar 4* (Karachi: al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, 2003); *Fatāwā-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat Nambar 5* (Karachi: al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, n. d.); *Fatāwā-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat Nambar 6* (Karachi: al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, n. d.); *Fatāwā-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat Nambar 7* (Karachi: al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, 2004) and *Fatāwā-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat (Athawan Hissah)*, (Karachi: al-Maktabatul al-Madīnah, 2008). According to an estimate, more than 100,000 *fatāwā* were issued, in traditional written form, from eleven branches of the *Dārul iftā' Ahl-i-Sunnat* situated in different cities of Pakistan until March 2015. *Dārul iftā' Ahl-i-Sunnat kī dīnī khidmāt* (Karachi: Majlis-i-iftā' Da'wat-i-Islāmī, 2015), 2-3.

⁵¹It was claimed by the DI that until March 2012, the *Majlis-i-Maktūbāt wa ta'wīdhāt-i-aṭṭārīyyah* had issued more than 2.6 million *ta'wīdh* annually with an average of more than 4,00,000 within a month in and outside Pakistan. This *Majlis* also conducts *istikhārah* (counseling prayer) for the saddened people. *Ibid.*, 362-363. However, women are not allowed to contact directly with this *Majlis*. Likewise, non-Muslims and followers of opponent sects are also not allowed to get benefit from this service.

⁵²Through this service more than 1,50,000 people are being benefited monthly.

⁵³Majlis al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, *Da'wat-i-Islāmī kī ja'īl khānahjāt ma'īn khidmāt* (Karachi: Maktabatul al-Madīnah, n. d.), 17-22. In the Karachi Central Jail, DI established *Jāmi'ah al-Madīnah* for the religious education of the prisoners.

⁵⁴Markazi Majlis-i-Shura, *Da'wat-i-Islāmī kā t'arūf*, 33.

⁵⁵Muhammad Ilyas Qādirī Raḍwī, *40 Ruhani 'ilaj* (Karachi: Maktabatul al-Madīnah, n. d.) and Majlis al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, *Tangdasti kē asbab aūr un kā hal* (Karachi: Maktabatul al-Madīnah, n. d.).

⁵⁶It is important to note that in July 2002, a fatwa was issued from the *Dārul iftā' Ahl-i-Sunnat* declaring income of cable network and watching Television as *haram*. *Fatāwā-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat Nambar 1*, 24-25 and *Raḍā-i-Muṣṭafah* (Gujranwala), October 2009, 13, 24. However, it was admitted by the DI that its anti-Television movement failed to convince the people that watching

Urdu magazine, *Faīdān-i-Madīnah* which is being read widely. An English version of this magazine is also being published from Birmingham, UK.

In order to attract the religious minded people trained by the Barelwi 'ulamā' and pīrs, it is usual in the DI to narrate the dreams, prophecies and conformation of forgiveness for those who attend its *ijtimā'āt* (pl. of *ijtimā'*). It claims that the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) sends *salām* (blessing) for the participants of these *ijtimā'āt*.⁵⁷ The DI has also published books showing that Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī can appear anywhere at any time and he has spiritual powers to help his *murīds* even against the jinns.⁵⁸

8. Conclusion

The DI aims to build good character in its members, particularly the young generation and to establish religious institutions. Nevertheless, it attracts diverse criticism about some of its practices and creeds.⁵⁹ DI does not propagate the complete teachings and philosophy of Islam as it emphasizes only on the *sunnat-i-mustahibah* (non-mandatory). Its erstwhile over-emphasis on wearing the turban, preferably green not only irritated common Muslims, but also 'ulamā' and *mashā'ikh* were reluctant to endorse it. They do not consider wearing the green turban as compulsory (*sunnat-i-mu'akkadah*). In fact, they hold that any type of cap or white or black colored turban can be used to cover one's head. DI requires each of

Television is an un-Islamic thing. Thus, it decided to give them better alternate and started its own channel. Majlis al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, *Madanī Chaīnal kē bare main 'ulamā' wa Shakhsiyyat kē ta'thurat kē Iqtabasat* (Karachi: Maktabatul al-Madīnah, n. d.), 2-3. Several 'ulamā', *mashā'ikh* and members of the civil society hailing from Pakistan and abroad welcomed the starting of this Channel. Majlis al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, *Madanī Chaīnal kē bare main 'ulamā' wa Shakhsiyyat kē ta'thurat* (Karachi: al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, n. d.) and Majlis al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, *Madanī Chaīnal kē bare main 'ulamā' wa shakhsiyyat kē ta'thurat kē iqtabasat (Qist Chharum)*, (Karachi: al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, n. d.) and *Jahān-i-Raḍā*, April 2011, 145-54.

⁵⁷Markazi Majlis-i-Shura, *Da'wat-i-Islāmī kā T'arūf*, 4. In the *Faīdān-i-Sunnat*, there are several dreams and prophecies describing the virtuousness and sacredness of Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī. Muḥammad Ilīās Qādirī, *Faīdān-i-Sunnat* (Karachi: Maktabatul al-Madīnah, 1988), 43-48. In this edition of the *Faīdān-i-Sunnat*, there were 11 endorsements written by Pakistani, Indian and Saudi Arabian 'ulamā'. However, in the 2006 edition, there were only three endorsements written by Pakistani and Indian 'ulamā'.

⁵⁸Majlis al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, *Quam-i-Jinnāt aūr Amīr-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat*, 105, 152-154, 204-226.

⁵⁹For the refutation of these criticisms see, Abu Kalīm Muḥammad Ṣiddīq, *Mithi Mithi Sunnatīyan aūr Da'wat-i-Islāmī* (Lahore: Muslim Kitābwī, 2001). Due to some theological and personal differences with Mawlānā Ilyas Qādirī, Mawlānā Muḥammad Shākir 'Alī Nūrī Raḍwī former in charge of Indian chapter of the DI, in 1991, formed his own faction with the name of *Sunni Da'wat-i-Islāmī*. For details see, Mujeeb Ahmad, "Conservative in Belief, Modern in Techniques *Da'wat-i-Islāmī*: A Revivalist Movement of the Barelwis," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 34 (Winter 2011) No. 2: 78-81.

its members to become a *murīd* of Mawlānā Qādirī in *Qādirīyah Raḍwīyyah 'aṭṭārīyyah* chain.⁶⁰

DI is apolitical movement working for the preaching of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah* almost all over the World. Although, its emphasis is on the 'religion as cult', however, it does believe in 'religion as moral action'. It does not bother to talk about economic exploitation; international issues concerning Muslims, particularly the prevailing wave of terrorism and extremism and very surprisingly even in the blasphemy issue.

DI wants to bring Muslim back to the *Sunnah* and save them from the westernization of their daily life. As a transnational movement, DI systematically focuses on new generation, who tend to be secondarily in traditional Islamic religious fields, which are usually dominated by male elders. The Islamic life style allows them to re-shape the Islamic religious field in their immediate environment. DI also propagates an inexpensive and healthy lifestyle free of intoxication and promiscuity.⁶¹ Although DI, by utilizing diverse media, made Barelwi interpretation of Islam available Online ('media religion' instead of 'conventional religion'), however, it has also published works on explaining the logic/reason and philosophy of Islamic rituals.⁶²

DI claims to practice Islam more broadly, based on the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*. Its intention is to strengthen religious beliefs and reinforce their observance. As a rule, DI does not seek to convert non-Muslims, however, due to its preaching some non-Muslim and even jinn converted to Islam in and outside Pakistan.⁶³

⁶⁰ *Raḍā-i-Muṣṭafah*, October 2009, 12-13. The followers of Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī called themselves as *sag-i-'attar* (dog of 'attar, title of Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī). Whereas, Mawlānā Ilīās Qādirī calls himself as *sag-i-Madīnah* (dog of Medina).

⁶¹ Thomas K. Gugler (2009), 'Parrots of Paradise – Symbols of the Super-Muslim: Sunnah, Sunnaization, and Self-Fashioning in the Islamic Missionary Movements Tablighi Jama'at, Da'wat-e Islami, and Sunni Da'wat-e Islami: (Shortened version)', Centre for Modern Oriental Studies, <http://www.proprint-service.de/pp/prvw> last accessed 12 June 2009 and Alix Philippon, *Soufisme et politique au Pakistan. Le mouvement barelwi à l'heure de la <<guerre contre le terrorisme>>* (Aix-en-Provence : Karthala, 2011), 85-86.

⁶² Muhammad Ilyas attar Qadiri Ridwi, *Wudhu And Science* (Karachi: Maktaba-tul-Madina, n. d.); Muḥammad Ilīās 'aṭṭār Qādirī Raḍwī, *Pan Gatga* (Karachi: Maktabatul al-Madīnah, n. d.); Majlis al-Madīnah al-'ālamīyyah, *Faīḍān-i-Zakat* (Karachi: Maktabatul al-Madīnah, 2008) and Abu Bilal Muḥammad Ilīās 'aṭṭār Qādirī Raḍwī, *Gharīlu 'ilaj* (Karachi: Maktabatul al-Madīnah, 2008).

⁶³ Markazi Majlis-i-Shura, *Da'wat-i-Islami ka t'arūf*, 4 and Majlis al-Madinah al-'ālamīyyah, *Quam-i-Jinnāt aūr Amīr-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat*, 52,139. For details see, Majlis al-Madinah al-'ālamīyyah, *Naū Muslim kī dard bhari Dastan* and Majlis al-Madinah al-'ālamīyyah, *25 karischan qaidiyun aūr padiri ka qabul-i-Islam* (Karachi: Maktabatul al-Madinah, n. d.).

It has made its mission run through enthusiastic *zīkr* and *na't* sessions, 'urs and *mīlād* celebrations.⁶⁴ Mawlānā Iliās Qādirī and DI have been mentioned among the 500 most influential Muslims of the World and an important revivalist movement of the Barelwis among other important international Islamic networks, respectively from 2010 to 2018.⁶⁵

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